Central Excise & Customs officers involved in drug smuggling

3463. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that four officers belonging to Central Excise and Customs Department were reported to have been involved with a Narcotic Gang and alleged to have helped them, indirectly, for carrying on smuggling activities in and around Delhi during the past 10 to 12 months;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and whether any action has so far been taken against any such official and if not the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a Senior Officer in the Customs Department has issued a circular to the effect that if any Customs Department employee is found guilty in any illegal transaction his Department's approval should be obtained prior to taking any legal action against such an employee; if so, the details thereof and also the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) and (b) No officers were involved in Narcotics smuggling during the past 10 to 12 months in and around Delhi. However, there was one case of smuggling of Watch Movements, Integrated of Circuits etc., in which four officers of Customs House, Delhi had allegedly connived with passengers and an employee of the International Airport Authority of India. These goods were allegedly smuggled from the warehouse on the pretext of appraisement and re-export by the passengers with the connivance of four officers of this department, all of the rank of Inspectors. All the four officers were detained under the COFEPOSA Act on 6.4.91. Their detention was however revoked on 18.06.91 by the Administrator, Union Territory of Delhi on receipt of the opinion of the Advisory Board. A complaint under the Customs Act, 1962 has been filed in the Court of the Additional Chief Metropoliton Megistrate Patiala House on 19.4.91. These officers are under suspension.

(c) A circular has been issued that no action should be taken against a departmental officer under the COFEPOSA Act 1974 without the approval of the Central Board of Excise & Customs on the ground that the COFEPOSA Act 1974 is meant to deal with smugglers and foreign exchange racketeers and that it is not to be invoked against Customs Officers in the ordinary course, except in very extreme cases.

Raids on Oswal group Of Industries

3464. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any raids and searches have been made by different intelligence departments on different units and organisations of Oswal group of Industries during the last five years;

(b) if so, what are the details of each search and investigation, separately; and

(c) what action has been taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR):(a) to (c) Information has been sought from various intelligence and enforcement agencies and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Review of viability of Indian Banks

3465. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any review about the health and viability of Indian Banks, especially nationalised banks has been undertaken, recently;

(b) if so, which of the banks were found profitable and which ones non-viable;

(c) what are the main reasons for the sickness of the banks; and

(d) what steps have been taken or are contemplated to reform the banking

system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) to (c) Government and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have been reviewing the performance of public sector banks, including nationalised banks, on an on-going basis RBI also conducts financial reviews of these banks every year. The last review relates to the accounting year ended 31st March, 1991. As per the published accounts for the year 1990-91, all the nationalised banks except UCO Bank, New Bank of India and Punjab and Sind Bank have shown profits. The unsatisfactory financial position of some of the banks is due primarily to deficiencies in their Credit administration both at appraisal and post-sanction stages.

(d) Government and RBI have taken a series of measures to improve the performance and profitability of the public sector banks. These include augmentation of their capital, rationalisation of service charges and interest rates structure and levy of commitment charges on unutilised portion of operating limits. Banks have also been advised to take measures to control expenditure in consumption of petroleum, publicity etc., draw up action plans to improve their operational efficiency and take steps to strengthen their viability and profitability by means of effective business planning and development.

Discussions with World Bank and IMF team on financial sector reforms

3466. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a World Bank and IMF team visited New Delhi towards the end of December last to discuss reforms in Financial Sector;

(b) if so, what specific proposals for reform were discussed with the team and what maladies and infirmities in the Financial Sector were sought to be remedied through these reforms; and

(c) what was the outcome of the talks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) No IMF team visited India recently, though a number of World Bank teams were in India recently in connection with dialogue on ongoing and proposed World Bank Projects/Programmes including Financial Sector.

(b) and (c). The Government constituted the Narasimham Committee to make recommendations for reforms in the financial sector. The recommendations are under consideration of the Government and Government has announced that recommendations which are accepted will be implemented in a phased manner.

Misuse of domestic electricity in Laxmi Nagar, Delhi

3467. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of workshops in different blocks of Laxmi Nagar, Delhi-1100092 are working on domestic electric connections are consuming more power than their sanctioned load;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what remedial action is being taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) to (c) During the raids conducted by DESU, certain cases of misuse of electric connections for purposes other than sanctioned and other violations of use of electricity have been detected in different areas, including Laxmi Nagar. Besides the action as may be called for under the relevant rules & regulations, misuse charges as per tariff policy are levied on the defaulters.